

position. The caucus had adjourned over to await his reply. The Colonel went on to say that he and two others had been deputed by the caucus with the agreeable duty of communicating with him, to ascertain his views as to the matter. We do not recollect what judgeship it was, but remember distinctly that Colonel Moore mentioned that in case of election, it would lead to, or require (we know not which) Mr. Peyton's change of residence to Richmond. In this letter Col. Moore on behalf of himself and his colleagues urged his friend to accept and presented many cogent reasons why he should do so. Proof against all importunities, Mr. Peyton politely but firmly rejected these overtures and declined under any circumstances to allow his name to be used in connection with the office. This circumstance is mentioned, not as an evidence of Mr. Peyton's indifference to preferment, which has sufficiently appeared, but to show the estimate in which he was held by the profession and to present, so far as possible, clearly and truthfully, the history of his life.

There is an old Spanish proverb which says, "Tell me whom you live with, and I will tell you who you are." We can infer what manner of man he was from the fact that through life, he was held in the highest esteem by the enlightened men of the day. From the ranks of the virtuous and wise came his friends, and what a source of happiness it must have been to him. It has been well said: "There is no blessing of life that is in any way comparable to the enjoyment of a discreet and virtuous friend. It eases and unloads the mind, clears and improves the understanding, engenders thoughts and knowledge, animates virtue and good resolutions, soothes and allays the passions and finds enjoyment for most of the vacant hours of life." If this be true, and who can doubt it? how much greater the happiness to be blessed, not with one,

but with many friends, and those friends, themselves worthy of every honor and praise. The steadiness and devotion of his friends is worthy of mention in this connection, they never deserted or betrayed him—on the contrary, through life, they gave him innumerable evidences of their appreciation. Some of his youthful college friends, they were not simply companions, among them Professor Comfort and the late John Yates, of Jefferson county, Virginia, visited him at Montgomery Hall, forty years after they parted at Princeton. And Mr. P's papers disclosed a correspondence with numerous others, such as John Sergeant, Joseph R. Ingersoll, Richard Rush, William Gaston, J. M. Berrien, of Georgia, and others of his earlier friends, all of whom became prominent men.

For clearness of thought, force of reasoning and statesmanlike views on all questions of moment he had no superior, and such was his sense of justice and his impartiality, his powers of judicial analysis and insight, or the judicial character of his mind, that we have often heard the most gifted of his contemporaries regret that he had never sat upon the Justice Seat, where in their opinion, he would have equaled, if he did not surpass, the greatest judges who had adorned the bench of Virginia.

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Notwithstanding his refusal to stand as a candidate for a Judgeship, he was voted for, in the General Assembly of Virginia in 1831-32, and came within a few votes of election. The result gave him satisfaction, for had he been chosen, he must have resigned, as unceremoniously as he was elected. He always explained to his supporters that he could not give up his extensive and lucrative practice, on account of his large and expensive family, for a poorly paid judgeship—and

besides he preferred the active and exciting life of a lawyer, to that of a judge, or in a word, the bar to the bench.

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### MR. PEYTON'S LETTER ON THE CONVENTION OF 1829-30.

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For several years previous to 1829, the question of calling a Convention to form a new Constitution for Virginia was agitated. There was a kind of political fermentation on the subject of innovation, with many persons, a strong desire to up-root the laws under which the State had so long prospered, and make a new experiment in government. The Ultras objected to the freehold basis of representation and demanded the white basis, or manhood suffrage, they opposed a judiciary elected for good behavior and demanded the election of judges at short intervals, by a popular vote. They objected to various other conservative provisions of the Constitution of 1776. Party spirit infused itself in all discussions and no small excitement was created in the public mind—as a result of the agitation on the subject. A convention, though opposed by the wisest men in the State, was finally ordered, and persons nominated for election were called upon to give their opinions through the newspapers, on the various questions which would come before it.

Among those asked for their views was Mr. Peyton, who published in the Staunton papers a long and able letter, in which he opposed the white basis; the election of judges by a popular vote and for a term of years; and advocated their election during good behavior, by the Legislature. He advised the retention, generally, of the conservative features of the old Constitution, and while he admitted that a few chang-

es might be made with advantage, warned the people against tampering with the laws, the currency and the peculiar institutions of the South. He added that he had voted against calling a Convention, believing that the Constitution of 1776, was better than any the people were likely to get from a new Convention; in a word, he bade them bear the "ills they had rather than fly to others they knew not of."

The letter was so conservative in character and so conclusive of the points at issue, that it was thought it would have gone a long way towards preventing the call of a convention, had it been published earlier. As it was, it only made the friends of organic change, more determined. They were bent on giving form and substance to their dreams, their passions were up and they would be satisfied with nothing else.

Some of the most advanced enthusiasts advocated, what are styled "women's rights," their right to vote, to serve on juries, to hold office and the like—others were opposed to allowing a man to enjoy the fruits of his industry, and favored dividing out his income when it had reached a certain sum; no doubt some would have liked the principal divided also, others favored free inquiry, if any one knows what this means in a country where investigation and thought are as free as the air we breathe; free religion, which was supposed to have been settled by Mason's act of 1776, legalizing all forms of worship, commonly called the act of religious freedom, free morals and opinions, and it is not unlikely there were others who favored free love as a means of squelching out polygamy. One of the most notorious and eccentric of these social reformers, was Fanny Wright, not, however, a native or resident of Virginia; and it was said, with what truth we know not, that the sum of her teachings amounted to this, that any man who

donned a whole coat and a clean shirt was an aristocrat and ought to be put down.

These misguided people sought to break the force of his views by a loud outcry, saying he was an old Bourbon, entirely behind the age, a praiser of times past, like Nestor in the Illiad; who wished the laws of Virginia to remain unchanged and as unchangeable as were those of the Medes and Persians, and would have it so if left alone. A looker-on would have supposed this enlightened man and moderate conservative, from this kind of ultra nonsense, as extreme in his policy as the notorious Lord John Manners, a man of phlegmatical repulsiveness of manners, who in admiration of his class, once exclaimed, with idiotic fatuity:

"Let wealth and commerce, laws and learning die  
But leave us still our old nobility."

The loss of Mr. Peyton's letter cannot be too much regretted. If reviewed the whole history of the Judiciary previous to and from the time of William III., when by act of Parliament the Judges were to hold office during good behavior, up to a later act of one of the George's, providing that their commissions were not to cease by demise of the Crown, and down to his day. He argued earnestly also, in favor of an independent judiciary, this question arousing his deepest interest, and showed up the curse of a venial and corrupt one, having in its unsafe keeping the lives, reputation and property of the people. He entered also, into an elaborate discussion of the question of popular representation, the first instance of which, it was stated, occurred in Aragon in the twelfth century, &c., and discussing the basis of representation, expressed himself, in case the freehold basis was discarded, as in favor of the mixed basis, taking into account both population and prosperity.

The letter breathed a really liberal and enlightened spirit in politics and religion, and made him the idol of the liberal conservatives. The extremist were, however, antagonized by it, and in their rage and disappointment, set to work to mar, if not destroy, his influence. While distorting and misrepresenting him and his opinions, they had the "cheek," to say, they did it "more in sorrow, than in anger."

Not at all disturbed by the hurly-burly, he laughed heartily at their nonsense, and said that these enthusiasts in their efforts to emancipate man socially, morally, politically and otherwise from all the ills of life, were innovators running after something they would never reach, as the hind wheel of the carriage which is in constant pursuit of the fore one without ever overtaking it. And when he got a chance at one of the Ring Bosses, and he sometimes cornered one, he handled him after such a fashion, that the Boss never wished to see him again. To these Bosses distance ever afterwards, lent enchantment to the view, of this man of relentless logic, keen irony and withering sarcasm. Many of these so-called Reformers aimed at nothing worse than their own advancement.

From the foregoing synopsis of Mr. Peyton's letter it is evident, if he did not say so, that, in his opinion, love of variety and change, a desire to subvert the existing state of things, indicated both weakness and ignorance; that it is not the strong-minded and right thinking who desire to cut loose from the past, its traditions and customs and its endearing associations, but the stupid, whose wild and dangerous projects carried out, would, however, unconsciously to themselves, give us poverty in lieu of prosperity, licence instead of liberty.

## MRS. ANNE PEYTON.

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### HER REMOVAL TO AUGUSTA COUNTY.

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During the year of 1829, Mrs. Anne Peyton, the widow of John R. Peyton, the hero boy of '76, and mother of John H. Peyton, broke up her establishment at Stony Hill and removed to Staunton. Some years before, namely on February 1st 1826, her son, Rowze Peyton, was married to a second wife, Eliza Murray, daughter of John B. Murray, a citizen of New York City, but a native of England. His Northern bride did not find plantation life congenial to her tastes and induced her husband to leave Virginia. After a brief sojourn in New York City, Mr. and Mrs. Peyton removed to Geneva, N. Y., where they long lived and both died, leaving a large and interesting family, now connected by marriage with many of the leading families of the Empire State—such as the Sewards, the Cuttings, Spensers, deZengs, Wilmerdings, Rathburns and others.

The venerable and respected mother of John H. Peyton was affectionately invited by her son and his wife, as soon as they heard of her intention to leave Stony Hill, to make her home at Montgomery Hall, which she decided to do. Mr. Peyton had built immediately, for her exclusive use, a comfortable brick residence in the grounds of and near the man-

sion. Here she took up her residence in the summer of 1829, and in that snug abode, she spent in singular ease and tranquility the rest of her life. At this time Mrs. J. R. Peyton was of large and striking person, dignified and graceful in manners. She was over 70 years of age, dressed in black, with a high-crowned white muslin cap and frill, a cap in the style of what is now known as the Martha Washington cap, and she looked at first sight eminently neat, precise and stately. She was in fine physical preservation and her mind and memory unimpaired. She was very accessible and companionable, she liked to see her friends and to chat, and her conversation was always full of thought and poetry. Her acquaintance with and knowledge of the leading Southerners of the pre- and Revolutionary era was extensive, and she possessed a large fund of information on social, literary, and political topics. This and her anecdotes, racy and amusing, caused her society to be courted by such men as Gen. Baldwin, Daniel Sheffey, and Chapman Johnson. Her parlor was the center of attraction and the rallying point of the family. Her grandchildren especially gathered round her chair, and listened with infantile delight, to her graphic accounts of the war, of the officers and soldiers, of their hairbreath escapes, of the battles, &c., and at that early day became familiar with the names of the Washingtons, Masons, Conways, Fitzhughs, Lees, Scotts, Marshalls, Moncures, Daniels, Greene's, and other prominent people of the Northern Neck, and all more or less connected with the bloody drama of the war.

At the premature death of her husband, when only 45 years of age, she was left with the heavy responsibility of a large and helpless family, and an extensive plantation and many slaves. Had she possessed less character and spirit, less force and ability, she must have been prostrated. The disaster,



however, seemed to call forth her strength, and gave such firmness and elevation to her character, that her friends and neighbors were filled with admiration and delight. This excellent woman, who had been during the prosperous period of her husband's life, all weakness and dependence, now displayed heroic qualities, showed herself equal to the trying position in which she was placed, displaying a mental force and firmness truly astonishing,—every difficulty was overcome, every obstacle put aside. She entered on her new career soberly and seriously, devoted herself to the education of her children and the management of their property. The children were taught to think justly of themselves and kindly of others. She aimed to store their minds with useful information and to form their moral and religious characters—thus giving them correct, practical ideas and good habits. Religion was the basis of her teachings and her children went into the world with just notions of human life, prepared if prosperity smiled upon them, to receive it with humble gratitude, and if calamity supervened to endure it with dignified patience. A kind Providence prolonged her life to see them a joy and a comfort to herself, and an honor to Virginia. She governed and directed the affairs of her estate with such skill and discretion that Old Stony Hill\* put on a new face, show-

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#### STONY HILL.

\*NOTE.—It may not be uninteresting to mention that the Stony Hill mansion was an old red brick building erected in the 17th century, with a wide hall and Grecian portico, commanding an extensive and beautiful view of Aquia creek and the Potomac river. The dwelling had grown to be a large and rambling domicile under the additions of four generations of the Peyton's, and all of them improving men. This fine old colonial house was demolished during the first year of the Civil-war, 1861-62, by Federal troops, on the spurious pretext that it was a necessity to have at once material for baking ovens. The old red bricks of this stately home, brought from England, as ballast in sailing vessels sent out to fetch back tobacco to Bristol, were

ed successful husbandry and yielded abundant crops—so much so, that the casual observer even could not fail to see that both white and black, there enjoyed prosperity and content. Greatly attached to this old family seat, where she had lived a half century, nothing but the marriage of her six children and their departure for new homes of their own, could have torn her from it. But when her only remaining son, Rowze, who had married a New York lady, mentioned his purpose of leaving Virginia and settling in New York, she quickly made up her mind to accept the invitation of her favorite son, John Howe, and to end her days at Montgomery Hall.

Mrs. Anne Peyton was a woman of worth, thoroughly honest, sincere and straightforward, with a fund of practical common sense. Her conversational powers were of no ordinary kind. A sincere, devout and humble Christian, a good wife, devoted mother, kind and sympathetic friend, she was in all respects a remarkable person. While it does not come within our scope to here enter at length into her life and character, it is right and due to her memory, that reference should be made to her exalted piety. So domestic, unobtrusive, and retired was her plantation life, that her name is little more than an echo in the age in which she lived, and might scarcely be even that, if it had not been kept somewhat in mind by the fame of her distinguished son. A considerable part of her time, after she fixed her residence at Montgomery Hall, was spent in the seclusion of her apartments, and much of every

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used to erect many ovens in which bread was baked for the invading northern army.

When John Peyton lived at Stony Hill the estate consisted of 1900 acres of fine land, and as far as the writer knows, still does. It is owned and occupied in 1894, by Mr. Moncure, a son of the late President of the Virginia Court of Appeals, Judge R. C. L. Moncure, whose widow still lives, and is a descendent of John Peyton.

day was given to meditation and prayer. She left behind many voluminous manuscript books, in which she had copied the Psalms, the Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, and many striking passages from other parts of Holy Writ, and containing many prayers, (original and quoted,) and ejaculations, suited to various occasions. These were of the following character, which will give an idea of the whole: "Supply, Oh Lord, the wants of a heart which knows not even how to lay them open before thee, which does not so much as think of doing it, and which too often shuts out the light and consolation of which it stands in need." And—

"These, O Jesus, are the things I ask. Intercede for me, that I may be truly sensible of the diseases that I labor under, and thankfully embrace the means which thy goodness has ordained for my recovery. Grant that the end of all my actions and designs may be the glory of God. Enable me to resist all the sinful appetites of my carnal nature. Grant that I may hunger and thirst after righteousness" &c., &c.

These MS. books contained also evidence that she prayed often, fervently and importunately, and that like Anna, she served God with fastings and prayers night and day. Luke ch. 2, v 37. She was never, however, "rash with her mouth," heeding. Eccl., ch. 5, v 2. On the contrary, her words were few and innocent of those vain repetitions against which our Saviour warns us in Matthew, ch. 6, v 7.

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## AFRICAN COLONIZATION.

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He advocated the colonization of our African population in Liberia and was one of the managers of the Augusta Coun-

ty Colonization Society, founded in 1831-32 to promote this end.

The managers submitted to the Society their annual report on the 21st of April, 1832, the following extract from which will show the object and purposes of the Society:

"Concerning the colony of Liberia, we have no information to communicate but such as the public prints have given from time to time, to all who wished to know what was going on at that interesting establishment. The sum of this information is, that the colony, gradually advancing in numbers, advances also in every branch of improvement and prosperity. We believe that in the whole history of colonization, there has never been an instance elsewhere of so cheering a degree of success from a similar amount of means and exertions. Divine Providence has evidently smiled upon the enterprise, and encouraged its friends to prosecute it with untiring perseverance.

Shall we close this paper here? A feeling which we assuredly know to be no other than a sincere regard for the honor and welfare of our country, prompts us to offer to the society some additional reflections.

It was never expected by any man of sense that the voluntary association of which we form an humble part, would be able to effect, by its own very limited energies, any sensible diminutive of the large and pernicious mass of our colored population. But we did hope to evince the practicability of acquiring an extensive and fertile territory in a suitable climate and of removing our negroes to it and setting them in it, with fair prospects of their becoming a respectable and happy nation; and thus to pioneer the way for delivering this otherwise favored land of ours from a burden, the sorest that ever afflicted any people under heaven. And this hope,

thanks be to God, we are permitted to see realized. The colony exists and flourishes. It remains that the legislative authorities of these Southern States, invigorated by the attainable and powerful aid of the Federal Union, take this business under their efficient patronage. And surely the period is now emphatically come for putting into action on this momentous subject our utmost talents and our utmost resources. After ages already lost in supineness, shall we still waste our precious time in disquisitions, as needless as they are unreconcilable with our boasted republican character, on what we call the right of property in our slave; while the deadly evil which we all profess to deplore, is gaining ground upon us with gigantic strides every year and every hour. We say needless disquisitions; for such they appear to us to be. Let liberal means be provided for removing far away those unfortunate beings amongst us whom we denominate free blacks, together with those slaves who shall be voluntarily manumitted for the purpose of removal. On this single condition, we are satisfied that there will be no necessity to interfere in a compulsory way with any man's right of property in his slaves. Public sentiment, incessantly acquiring expansion and strength will much better achieve the glorious consummation.

But suppose this to be a visionary picture. Suppose that yet greater sacrifices shall be found indispensable. What then? Shall we shrink from the making of those sacrifices for the salvation of our native land, the loveliest and the choicest of all lands? Shall we tamely sit still, and see Virginia despoiled of much of her strength by unexampled emigration to other regions, and by this means ripening the more speedily as a harvest for the scythe of the assassin. Shall we, after all that we have seen and heard within nine months past,

persist in the slumber and indolence of infatuation? Or shall we soon arise in all our zeal, and all our united strength, to devise and to pursue the measures by which alone such a tremendous issue may be arrested, and our country rendered truly prosperous and happy? How these questions are to be answered by facts, time must discover, and God only, who is omniscient, can certainly foresee. For our part, though we deeply lament that the equally able and eloquent discussion which recently took place on this most important topic in the hall of our legislature was suffered to float away into the air, yielding no practical results; yet we think we ought not to abandon the cause of liberating our beloved country from the abominations and the curse of slavery, in utter despair. A better day may be about to down upon us. Perhaps the discussion to which we have referred, itself a wondrous phenomenon in Virginia, may not die away as a fruitless expenditure of feeling and genius. And in the meanwhile, let us continue our labors for the improvement of the Colony, that it may become a more capacious, and in every way convenient receptacle for drawing off, when the good season for the extended operations shall arrive, the pestilential nuisance of our African population.

The prominent men of that period associated with Mr. Peyton in this good work were Rev. Conrad Speece, Joseph Cowan, Samuel Clarke, John McCue, George Eskridge, Charles A. Stuart and others.

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## RETIRES FROM THE BAR AND IS ELECTED TO THE SENATE.

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Mr. Peyton determined some years before he was 60

years of age, to retire from the bar when he reached that time of his life, and did so. After he was sixty he took no new cases, only in one case making an exception to this rule in favor of an old and valued friend, who earnestly implored and begged for his services. He gave them to this friend and lost the case in the circuit superior court of Augusta, but was so well satisfied that the case was erroneously decided that he took an appeal, and after Mr. Peyton's death the decision of the lower court was reversed and thus his client ultimately gained his cause. After he reached the age of 60 he only attended his office and the courts to wind up his business.

His friends knowing his purpose to give up the bar determined, if possible, to secure his services in the Senate. He was solicited on all sides to go to the Senate, and the following letter appeared in the Lexington and Staunton papers:

*"To the Voters of the Senatorial District of Rockbridge and Augusta:*

FELLOW-CITIZENS—

The next session of the Legislature will be the most important which has occurred for many years past. The criminal laws of the Commonwealth are all to be revised, the subject of education is to be thoroughly considered, and the great schemes of internal improvement are to be brought forward and vigorously pressed by their respective friends. Under these circumstances it is particularly important that this District should be ably represented in the Senate of Virginia, the body that must supervise and give the finishing touches to the Legislation on all three subjects. Rockbridge and Augusta, long famed for their morality and good order, have a deep interest in having the system of fixed laws brought to the highest state of perfection. They

have their primary schools, the academies and colleges all requiring an *able champion* and *enlightened patron*, and they have their respective schemes of improvement: the James River canal, the extension of the Louisa railroad and continuation of the macadamized turnpike from Staunton to Buchanan, demanding the support of a powerful intellect and matured experience.

In looking around for a suitable representative of the District, the eyes of everyone seem attracted to *John H. Peyton, Esq.*, of Augusta, as the man. He is a gentleman of distinguished ability and unblemished integrity. He has long been known to Virginia as the ablest criminal lawyer in her borders, and hence he is peculiarly qualified to discharge the duties incident to the revision of those laws. His general attainments and enlightened views of, and on all subjects qualify him in a high degree to aid in constructing a system of public education which shall diffuse the genial rays of knowledge through all classes of society, and he has evinced his deep interest in the success of the James river improvement by the most substantial of all proofs—the investment of large sums of money in its work.

Mr. Peyton now holds several lucrative offices and he is in the enjoyment of an extensive and extremely profitable law practice, but it is understood that he is willing to relinquish them all if his fellow-citizens should require his services in the Senate. It is a subject of congratulation to the district that such is the fact, and I cannot believe that the district will hesitate for a moment to avail itself of the services of so distinguished an individual. It would be a subject of just pride to our district to send such a man to the Senate. He would tower head and shoulders above any other man in that body, and the impress of his talents and learning would



be permanently visible upon the statute books of Virginia. Let the voters of the district then, go forward as one man, and record their votes for John H. Peyton. Let them recollect that it is a duty which they owe their country to select the man who, from his talents and acquirements, is best suited to discharge the duties of the station. When in the management of his private affairs, it becomes necessary to employ an agent or an attorney, they always seek the man best qualified, and upon the same principle, when they are about to choose an agent not only for themselves but for their country and posterity, (for in the administration affairs we are trustees for posterity) they should elect the man who is able to render the most efficient services to the public.

The office of Senator is at all times an important one; but under present circumstances, there is a peculiar propriety in selecting the strongest man, for it is universally conceded that there is a woeful deficiency of talent in the Senate. The election of Mr. Peyton would therefore be hailed with satisfaction by the whole State; and he would be from our district, the Senator of Rockbridge and Augusta.—Lexington Gazette and Spectator, May 2, 1839.

A VOTER.

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## MR. PEYTON'S LETTER CONSENTING TO RUN FOR THE SENATE. HIS POLITICAL SENTIMENTS.

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*To the voters of the Senatorial district composed of the  
counties of Rockbridge and Augusta.*

FELLOW-CITIZENS:

Having authorized my name to be placed before you as a candidate to represent you in the Senate of Virginia, I deem

it a duty I owe alike to you and myself to make a plain and distinct avowal of my political sentiments.

Though it is true that a member of the Senate of Virginia, has little to do with Federal politics, and may not during his whole term of service be called upon to express a single opinion upon them, yet, in a representative republic it is not only proper that the political sentiments of a candidate should be distinctly understood, but it is equally proper that he should possess political sentiments congenial with those of his constituents.

Under this impression, the following brief statement is made.

I came into public life about the period of the election of James Madison as President of the United States.\* I served as a member of the House of Delegates of Virginia the two sessions of 1808-9, 1809-10. I was a friend to the election of Mr. Madison and a warm and zealous advocate of the measures of his administration.

Among the measures to which I gave my hearty support was the establishment of the late Bank of the United States. Since that period I have not mingled in politics. As a citizen, however, I approved generally of the administration of James Monroe, and was opposed to the election of his successor, John Quincy Adams.

I advocated the election of Andrew Jackson, and supported most of the measures of his administration during his first term. I also voted reluctantly for his re-election, I disapproved of his veto to the bill to recharter the Bank of the United States, and the *ad captandum* arguments used by him to justify the measure. I attributed the act then, how-

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\*FOOT NOTE.—Mr. Madison was elected President in 1809 and re-elected in 1813.

ever, more to the feelings created by the particular time when Congress passed the bill—it being just previous to his second election, than to any settled hostility on his part to a United States Bank.

Shortly after his re-election, he commenced a train of measures to which I was utterly opposed; measures of a novel and alarming character, and which in their origin and subsequent developments, brought distress and embarrassment upon the banks, upon the country at large, and especially upon all our great commercial interests. I allude to his wild, violent and undigested schemes of finance—commencing with his pet Bank system and ending with his order in council, the Specie circular.

This warfare upon the Bank of the United States, the currency and the commerce of the nation, reduced us in 1837 to the degradation of witnessing a general suspension of specie payments by the banks.

These acts connected with the corrupting system of party discipline introduced by that administration with the view of compelling private judgement to succumb to the behests of party, completely separated me from the administration of Andrew Jackson.

His successor who pledged himself in advance “to follow in the footsteps of his predecessor,” and who has gone a bow-shot beyond him in obstinately pressing upon a free and intelligent people; his thrice rejected scheme of a sub-treasury—to him and his measures I have always been strenuously opposed.

Upon those subjects which fall more legitimately within the scope of the duties of a Virginia State Senator—in advancing and promoting the great cause of internal improvement, and in the diffusion of light and knowledge among our

people, and in the general objects of legislation, my interest is identified with yours.

Finally, occupying the relation I now do, fellow citizens, towards you, by no procurement of my own, but having been pressed into it by the solicitation of friends; I have thought it right thus briefly, but at the same time explicitly, to state my political views. I have felt this duty the more imperative—because having been once a supporter of General Jackson's administration, and no public occasion having since occurred, except at the polls, to make my subsequent opinions known were I silent some might cast their votes in this election under a misapprehension of my sentiments. Whilst, then, I would regard an election to the Senate of Virginia as a flattering proof of your confidence—I could not but regard that confidence misplaced and valueless, were it bestowed by the people without knowing where and how I stand."

JOHN H. PEYTON.

*Spectator, May 9, 1859.]*

He was duly elected and took his seat at the next session of the Senate.

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### MORE OLD LETTERS.

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For want of a better place, the following bundle of old letters, running in date from October, 1823, to April, 1839, are here given. They possess a peculiar interest to the children of Mr. Peyton, unimportant as they are, since they exhibit, the domestic side of his character : are pages in the history of the family and it has been well said that, "Every family is a history in itself and even a poem to those who know how to search its pages."

JOHN H. PEYTON TO HIS WIFE.

Charlottesville, Oct., 9th, 1823.

*My Dear Wife :*

It is now Thursday morning, and we are not yet through with the trial of the first criminal, and there are three others waiting trial. When we will finish with them I cannot undertake to say.

I have employed as overseer for my farm near Staunton, a relative of my present overseer, who bears the same name. As you seem so partial to your countymen, old O'Sullivan, I will send him to my farm on Jackson river. Don't expect me till you see me, for it is impossible to say when I can return—the Judge thinks of holding a court next week. If so I will write you.

Keep everyone busy preparing winter clothing for the negroes—send for the overseer and tell him that it is my particular wish that he should; as soon as the seeding is finished, plough the large field around Sinaugh's house. Tell him to have the wheat threshed out. Adieu. Kiss little Susan for me, and believe me

Your affectionate husband,

JOHN H. PEYTON.

P. S.—Miss Nicholson is here and well.

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SAME TO SAME.

Harrisonburg, Feb. 18, 1824.

*My Dear Ann:*

I was exceedingly gratified to get your affectionate letter of the 16th inst., written in that calm spirit of fortitude and resignation which convinces me that you take a right view of our late misfortune (supposed to be the loss of a child). I was

fearful until I received your letter that you would be uneasy at my detention here, and am delighted that you are acquiring patience and learning to submit with composure to the inevitable. When you have learnt well these practical lessons you will be much better prepared to encounter the trials and disappointments of life, and nothing is truer than that all mankind must and will experience calamities. When we are prosperous we should always look for a reverse of fortune, and when we are in adversity we should recollect that it is the common lot of humanity. No one ever yet enjoyed uninterrupted happiness, and those who have most nearly approached it, are the sober, the virtuous, and industrious. The indolent are always unhappy and nearly always vicious. If you wish to be happy attend to the duties of your household—these will give you exercise and exercise will insure you health of body and mind. When the mistress takes an interest in domestic affairs—sees that the servants do their duty, that the house is neat and in order; that regular hours are kept by all, in a word, when good house wifery prevails, it affords more real happiness to the well regulated mind of the mistress than any, or all of the so-called fashionable amusements of the gay world. Such a house wife cannot fail to be loved at home and respected abroad.

No one is exempt from trouble, mental or physical, and the weight of both may seem at times bearing you to the ground, but take heart and the sum of your enjoyment will always outweigh your troubles. The Almighty in his infinite wisdom, mercy and goodness, has so constituted our minds, that past pleasures and enjoyments can always be vividly recalled to our recollection, past sufferings with difficulty, and seldom in detail. I would advise you to attempt by all means to divert your attention from your own person and

surroundings, to other objects. The providence of God has surrounded us with objects of improving distraction, by which we may be led to think of Him. The same hand that strews pleasures in your way, has left no situation, however painful or disagreeable, where an antidote to your distress has not been placed within reach. You must, however, rouse yourself and seek for it. We constantly meet persons who complain that everything goes wrong with them, while with another "whatsoever he doeth prospers." This striking difference is generally to be accounted for, not by the doctrine of chances, but by a reference to the temper and character of the respective parties. Imprudence, or ill temper, for instance, will either mar the success of any project, or present it in a distorted and unfavorable aspect.

It must not be forgotten that this advice comes from your best friend, from one who has had large experience and who has made the springs of human action much his study.

What a field of rational enjoyment is opening before you in little Susan. You can watch the shooting idea, can restrain any exuberance, instil in her right principles, make her reverence virtue, detest vice. It is astonishing how soon good principles may be made to take root, and bad ones be eradicated. Never tell her, or suffer others to tell her she is beautiful. If she is so she will find it out too soon. Teach her to place her claims to distinction upon good sense, good principles, modesty, delicacy, affectionate deportment to her parents—respectful behavior to all. Let her respect herself and respect others. Then she will be in the widest and best sense a lady. It is astonishing how early in life the temper of children begins to be formed, and consequently how soon that important part of the business of education, which consists in the training of the mind to habits of discipline and

submission, may be commenced. "I wish very much to consult you about the education of my little girl," said a lady some years since to a friend, "who is now just three years old." "Madam," replied the friend, "you are at least two years late in applying to me on the subject." Lose no time in instilling the principles of unhesitating obedience and thus lay the foundation of paternal authority, while teaching your children self-control, self-denial, and how to gain a mastery over their passions. Warn her of the trials and difficulties which more or less come to us all, but especially to the careless and indifferent.

The suit in which I am engaged will probably be spun out till Friday evening. I will endeavor in this case to be with you the next day.

With sincerity of affection, your husband,

JOHN H. PEYTON.

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SAME TO SAME.

Lewisburg, June 7th, 1824.

*My dear Ann :*

Baldwin and myself arrived here the third day after we left Staunton, in good health. We passed Captain Massie's on Monday and regretted to find both Mrs. Massie and the Captain indisposed. Sarah and the rest of the family were well. Susan has a fine daughter, but has been so unfortunate as to take the milk fever. She was, however, better of it, and I hope by the time I return will be entirely well. General Breckenridge and family and Woodville and family are here and in their usual health. Colonel Andrew and Capt. John Lewis are also here.



I hope to leave on Thursday next—on Friday shall stop at my farm, surveying the land I have entered, and on Saturday leave on my return to Staunton, if nothing happens to prevent it—on Sunday evening I hope to be with my beloved wife and child—send at once to Maupin (the overseer) and direct him to detail hands to work the vegetable garden.

We were all invited to dine to-day with Lewis Stuart, but his wife was taken ill last night and the invitations were recalled. It was a disappointment, but as the day is exceedingly warm I think we have lost nothing. The Colonel has not been at Captain Massie's yet, and I think Sarah looks a little dejected. No news of William Lewis as yet. The sale I expect will be postponed until August.\*

Present Woodville affectionately to Lynn and Benjamin. He unites with me in love to you and little Susan.

I am, with anxious desire to be with my dear Ann,

Your affectionate husband,

JOHN H. PEYTON.

The "little stranger" mentioned in the following letter is the present Col. John Lewis Peyton, the eldest son by the second marriage of Mr. Peyton. Business engagements making it impossible for Mr. P. to be in Staunton at the birth, intelligence was sent him of the event by his favorite man servant, Ben Potter, who rode on horseback to Lexington during the night.

Lexington, 16th September, 1824.

*My Dear Ann :*

Ben Potter arrived this morning bringing the glad

\*This refers to the sale of the personal property of Colonel John Lewis, Mrs. Peyton's father.

tidings that you had presented me with a fine son, and that you and the infant were as well as could be expected. For this I feel grateful, and I regret that I could not have been with you in the hour of tribulation—everything, however, happens for the best. I am engaged in a cause of importance, the evidence in which was closed this evening. The argument takes place tomorrow, after which I will leave here and try to reach Colonel McDowell's on my way home. If nothing unusual occurs, I will reach home on Saturday evening. In the meantime take good care of yourself and the baby. Be particular not to expose yourself and take cold. Present me affectionately to my good friends, Mrs. Baldwin and Mrs. Williamson, and tell them I shall not forget their kind and friendly attentions to you. Mr. and Mrs. Woodville have not yet arrived—I presume they are detained by bad weather.

Direct Ben, on his return, to open a cask of wine for the entertainment of your friends. Ben is careful and may be trusted. Give my love to the family, and kiss the little stranger for me.

Your affectionate husband,

JOHN H. PEYTON.

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SAME TO SAME.

Warm Springs, April 3, 1823.

*My Dear Wife:*

I had just got off my horse from Pocahontas when the post going to Staunton arrived. I delayed it long enough to put in this note for you.\* The Judge and myself have fared very well among the people of Pocahontas and arrived here safely and in good health, the snow, rough weather and bad roads

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\*The mail was then carried on horseback, and the postoffice was in the office of the tavern.

to the contrary notwithstanding. I have barely time to tell you this and to say that my anxiety to see you, my children, my sister and brother was never greater.

I have made money on the circuit, enough to pay every debt.

In great haste, but as ever your affectionate husband,

• JOHN H. PEYTON.

SAME TO SAME.

Charlottesville, Oct. 11th, 1826.

*My Dear Ann:*

I stayed at Mr. Diver's (Farmington) on the night of the day we parted, and on the next morning about 10 o'clock reached here.

Monday evening I spent at Mr. Kelley's in company with Mr. and Mrs. Cochran, Mr. and Mrs. Hatch, Mr. and Mrs. Gilmer. Lynn is living in a sedate, pious, gentle family, and is surrounded by every comfort, and has an affectionate, good husband, who appears to be doing a good paying business) as a merchant).

Our court business progresses slowly, so that I do not expect to get off before Saturday or Sunday.

If Mr. Cochran (G. M.) has not obtained the bacon I ordered from Mr. Hogg, you must keep up the supply on the farm from the market, and by now and again killing a mutton.

In great haste, your affectionate husband,

JOHN H. PEYTON.

SAME TO SAME.

Callaghan's Tavern, Nov. 4th, 1827.

*My Dear Ann:*

I am informed by Judge Taylor that my sister, Lucy Green, of Kentucky, arrived a few days since in Montgomery county on a visit to my late brother's family, (Capt. Garnett Peyton's.) She is on her way to see my mother at Stony Hill, and will not, of course, pass us without a visit. Though she is impatient to get on, do not let her go until I return, for nothing could give more pleasure than to see her.

I missed seeing the wedding party at Capt. Massie's, (marriage of John Hamden Pleasants to Capt. M.'s daughter Mary.) They had gone to Fincastle on a visit to the Woodville's. They intend paying us a visit on their return. Woodville is with me and well.

Present me affectionately to the children and make my kind regards to Mrs. Talfair.

Sincerely your affectionate husband,

JOHN H. PEYTON.

SAME TO SAME.

Richmond, January 19th, 1828.

*My Dear Ann:*

I had intended to leave here this morning, but the weather would not admit of it. It has been raining the whole day. I think the weather will admit of my continuing my journey tomorrow, for though I have been treated with great hospitality since my arrival, I had rather be at home with my dear wife and children than anywhere on earth.

Mary Green, of Kentucky, is here, and is an affectionate, good girl. She appears to be sincerely attached to you, and says she had a great deal rather be at Montgomery Hall with Aunt Ann, than in Richmond, with all its fashion and gaiety. Bernard has given me two dining parties since we have been here. We were also invited to dine at Johnson's, (Chapman,) but could not attend, owing to a previous engagement at Leigh's, (B. W. Leigh's.) I was obliged also to decline dining at Dr. Brockenbrough's for the same reason, and I have, for the same reason, had to decline the invitation to dine with Mr. Daniel. One day I dined with Gen. Sam'l H. Lewis at Duval's; on another, with the Triplett's; on another day was invited to dine by all the members of the Legislature at the Bell Tavern, and did so. Many distinguished strangers were present. On another occasion, I dined, by invitation, with all the members of our party. We have been well, with the exception of a cold I caught attending a book auction. I am, however, getting the better of it, and hope by the time I reach Stafford to be well. My stay in Stafford will be short. I shall stop with sister Lynn (Cochran) on my return. Cochran has a very snug, cosy establishment. I have purchased a lot of nice things for you; had them boxed and sent to Bernard's (Gen. Bernard Peyton's) commission house to be forwarded home by the first conveyance, with a number of law and miscellaneous books bought here. I am fearful these articles will not reach Staunton soon, as the condition of the roads is at present wretched.

I must conclude with the hope that I will receive a letter from you in Stafford.

Amanda, (Mrs. General Bernard Peyton) and all send their best respects and regards to you.

Kiss my little cherubs for me, and believe me, as ever your affectionate husband,

JOHN H. PEYTON.

SAME TO SAME.

Stony Hill, Stafford, Feb, 24, 1828.

*My dear Ann:*

I had the happiness to receive your letter of the 19th upon my arrival here, which gives me great pleasure indeed. My detention in Richmond will prevent my return home as soon as I expected. On Saturday next I expect to leave here.

Rowze's wife has a fine daughter, [The present Mrs. T. R. Spenser, of Geneva, N. Y.] was born the day before our arrival. My mother, Lucy, Miss Gallagher and Rowze all send their love to you.

Your affectionate husband,

JOHN H. PEYTON.

1828.

Warm Springs, 14th March, 1828.

*My Beloved Wife :*

The day I left you I reached Colonel McDowell's, (near Fairfield, Rockbridge county,) where I spent the night in the agreeable society of the family and my dear old aunt. On the next day about 12 o'clock, I arrived in Lexington and dined with Mr. Taylor.\* I spent the evening and night with James McDowell, Jr.† Next day I settled my business in court, spent the afternoon and night with Taylor, and in the morning set out for Jackson River, and on Friday reached

\*Hon. James Taylor, M. C. for this district and an old and intimate friend of Mr. Peyton, who served with Major Peyton in the army during the war of 1812-15 and whose friendship was continued up and the time of Mr. Peyton's death in 1847.

† Subsequently M. C. for this district and Governor of Virginia—Governor McDowell and Mrs. Taylor were both first cousins of Mrs. Peyton.

Captain Massie's, having crossed the mountain by McGraw's gap, and after an hour's delay proceeded to my farm where I lodged. Captain Massie and his son, Henry, dined with me next day, and the same evening my son William arrived from Pocahontas. He remained with me until Sunday when we went to Captain Massie's to dinner. After dinner William proceeded to the Hot Springs and I returned to the farm.

On Monday I rode to Alexander Paris', the old Morris tavern, to dinner, and thence to William McClintic's, where I remained all night. On Tuesday, I rode out in the rain to the Warm Springs, When I arrived the water streaming from my neck, arms, cuffs, and my body was wet to the skin, a warm bath, change of clothing, a good dish of roast beef by a blazing fire, washed down with a bottle of rum negus soon warmed me to life and spirits. Since then I have been busily occupied in court until this evening. Tomorrow I leave for the Supreme court of Pendleton and expect to arrive there by Tuesday evening. It distressed me to see my learned brethren of the bar returning to their families when I was doomed to another week's absence. But my wife will love me the more for this privation, when she recollects that both duty and interest demand the sacrifice. I found all well at the farm, all lazy and happy, all idle and contented. I did not disturb them, left them to enjoy life in their own way. I hope sister Sarah and cousin Susan Preston will remain with you until I get back—nothing affords me more gratification in my unavoidable absence on the circuit than the thought that you are happily consoled by the society of your friends.

Tell Ben to lose no time with the work of gardening and to transplant from the old garden near the stone spring house the currant and raspberry bushes.

Tell Dempster to keep the wagons busy getting out the

manure, and to see that George and Dick are constantly engaged in rail-splitting—the fences need repairing. Give my love to Sarah Lewis and Susan Preston, to my little chicks, Susan, John and Ann.

As ever, my dear Ann, your affectionate husband,

JOHN H. PEYTON.

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SAME TO SAME.

Lewisburg, June 17th, 1828.

*My dear wife:*

I spent Tuesday and Wednesday after we parted at the Warm Springs. On Thursday, Mayse, Terrell, and Grattan dined with me at my plantation on Jackson's river—the same evening we rode to Callaghan's Tavern and on Friday reached this place. I have a beautiful crop of corn on Jackson's river, and indeed, the crops of all kinds look promising and the negroes are healthy, contented and happy. I am in good health and closely occupied in court. Woodville has not yet arrived, he is detained in the courts of Botetourt and Monroe, I expect him in a day or two—Col. Andrew Lewis and Capt. John Lewis are both here attending the court. How do my little children come on? I suppose Susan is attending her school regularly and that John with his innocent and lively prattle, and Ann keep up their mother's spirits. How does Demster get on securing the hay crop? Tell him to have the cradles prepared for the harvest. Have your wool packed and sent to Ben. Crawford's store with directions to forward it to Barr's to be carded. By doing so the rolls will be ready to be spun as soon as the women can be spared from the harvest field.

Isaac Bowyer has arrived here and tells me that the commisssoners appbinted to assign Mrs. Mary B. Lewis her dow-



er in Dr. Lewises lands at the Sweet Springs, have set off to her 204 acres out of the land of your brother William, including the meadow and brick house. Your old neighbor, Susan Bowyer, near the Sweet Springs, is dead—the rest of your old friends and neighbors are well.

Tell Mrs. Baldwin that her husband [Judge Briscoe Baldwin] is in good health and spirits. He had the ill luck to have his gig broken to pieces on the road to the Warm Springs—one of the shafts of the sulky broke, this alarmed the horse—Baldwin perceived it and leaped from the gig, the horse then ran off with the gig at his heels and broke it in a dozen pieces. He had a bottle of old wine rolled up in the foot-board and though the board was kicked to atoms the bottle was not broken. Was there ever such luck! We went on to Miller's where we recounted our misfortunes over the wine which prevented undue depression of spirits. The horse was uninjured and procuring a saddle, Baldwin mounted the reclaimed steed who was dripping wet, his eyes dull and his whole countenance dejected, and we jogged on very pleasantly, cheered by the Madeira and the reflection that things were not so bad as they might have been.

When I write again I will be able to give you more information of our friends. In the meantime be of good cheer and believe me,

Your affectionate husband,

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SAME TO SAME.

Warm Springs, March 13th, 1829.

*My dear Ann:*

I have business at the Superior Court of Pendleton, which I cannot well postpone, or I would return directly home. My

stay at Pendleton, however, will be short. As usual on first leaving home in the spring I have taken cold. There is a great difference between the log cabins of these mountains and the substantial and comfortable houses of Augusta. For example, it snowed last night and when I waked this morning my bed was covered with snow which beat in through the window—the floor was nearly covered also, the snow coming in under the door. At this inclement season a journey to Pendleton can't be styled a pleasure trip.

William has been here during the court and leaves today for Botetourt. He appears to be in pretty good health.

Tell Mrs. Telfair I stopped at the Wilderness (General Blackburn's) on my way out and found all well—many affectionate inquiries were made about her. Keep up your spirits—when you look at Susan, John and Ann it ought to satisfy you with my absence.

Yours affectionately,

JOHN H. PEYTON.

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SAME TO SAME.

Lewisburg, Nov. 18, 1830.

*My Dear Ann:*

After your return home, I remained several days at the Warm Springs, and after court rose, went with William, Sam'l McD. Moore, (subsequently M. C.,) and Alexander P. Eskridge, son-in-law of Judge Allen Taylor and brother-in-law of William Madison Peyton, to the Hot Springs, where we found Sally and the children, (the wife and children of Wm. M. Peyton,) and were hospitably and elegantly entertained. They all made many friendly enquiries after you,

sister Sarah and Thomas.\* On Friday I went to my plantation and procured of Mann a deed to the Mill and the land in the Falling Spring Valley. Saturday I reached Callaghan's, and thence took the stage to this place, after sending my horse back to the farm to remain till my return, a fortnight hence. Woodville arrived on yesterday and reports his wife better. As soon as he gets back to Fincastle, they intend making us a visit, as he will be detained some time in Staunton attending the Chancery Court. From Staunton he will go to Culpeper on a visit to his father. Tell Thomas to stick closely to his studies, particularly Arithmetic and Algebra. The overseer should secure the corn crop and cart out the manure. Tell him to thresh fifty bushels of rye and send it to Major Summer's distillery, to be made into whiskey.

I hope Susan and John are diligently employed at school, and that the rest of our small fry are doing well.

The mildness of the season has presented my feeling any inconvenience from having no woollen shirts. Woodville joins me in love to yourself and the children, to Sarah and Thomas.

Your affectionate husband,

JOHN H. PEYTON,

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SAME TO SAME.

Lexington, Va., Sept. 19th, 1834.

*My Dear Ann :*

On the day I left home I reached here in good time, but

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\*The late Major Thomas Preston Lewis, the youngest son of Major John Lewis, of the Sweet Springs, a man of many noble traits of character, who died unmarried in Augusta county in 1877, deeply regretted.

by some misadventure took a cold which has kept me coughing ever since. The heat of the weather and my heavy clothing has caused a reaction and I hope soon to be myself again.

I found Col. Benton and his family\* at James McDowell's, and spent some time with them very pleasantly—they will pay us a visit in October. I am stopping as usual at Taylor's, they are so pressing in their invitations and will admit of no excuses that I have fallen into the habit of making their house my home while here.

Mr. Poindexter is in Lexington, and will marry to-day the widow Lewis. The wedding is to be private, and the happy pair will leave immediately in their barouche for Eastern Virginia.

James McDowell and wife have just gone to a meeting of the Preston family in Abingdon with a view to the adjustment of your grandfather and grandmother's estates, and though your mother will not be represented in this meeting her claim, while the claims of others is adjusted, cannot be overlooked. I hope therefore, when they return to hear something satisfactory. Nath'l Hart, of Kentucky, has been chiefly instrumental, I understand, in bringing about this meeting. Write me on Monday addressed to the Warm Springs and let me hear how you all are. Give my love to my mother and the children.

I am your affectionate husband.

JOHN H. PEYTON.

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\*Hon. Thomas H. Benton, U. S. Senator for Missouri, and author of "*Thirty Years' View; or, a history of the working of the American Government for thirty years, from 1820 to 1850.*" Colonel Benton married Miss McDowell, a sister of Governor James McDowell, a cousin of Mrs. J. H. Peyton.

SAME TO SAME.

Norfolk, Dec. 19, 1835.

*My dear wife:*

Whilst Susan and Miss Robinson, who accompanied her from Richmond, are drinktng tea at Mr. Loyal's,\* under the care of Mr. Valentine, I take the pen to scribble you a few lines. On Wednesday we came down the river from Richmond in the Steamer Patrick Henry, with all Gen. Blackburn's emancipated slaves and their luggage on board, On the next day I delivered them to the agent of the Colonization Society and paid their passage to Liberia. On Friday the girls took tea at Mr. Smith's. The evening before they spent at Mr. Robertson's. Today we visited Old Point, making the trip in the steamer, Old Dominion. After visiting the fortifications, which I had not seen since 1814, with Col. Bankhead and Capt. Washington we dined at the Hotel and returned in the evening. Tomorrow we shall go to hear my old friend, Bishop Meade, preach. On Monday we expect to visit the navy yard, Gosport and the dry dock, and on Tuesday return by the Patrick Henry. Both Susan and myself are in good health.

My stay in Richmond will be brief I never wished more to be at home. The people everywhere are very kind and hospitable; my friends are attached and attentive in different ways, but I do not enjoy my trip, because I am away from those most dear to my heart. I derive more pleasure from an evening in the midst of my family than any to be derived from travel. I love the society of my own family, of John, clinging to my knees, Ann, Mary, Lucy, the girls singing abed. "No man can tell," says Jeremy Taylor, "but he that

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\*Mr. Loyal was the father of Mrs. Admiral Farragut—the gallant Admiaal so much distinguished during the war.

loves his children, how many delicious accents make a man's heart dance in the pretty conversation of these dear pledges; their childishness, their stammering, their little angers, their innocence, their imperfections, their necessities, are so many emanations of joy and comfort to him that delights in their person and society." I may misquote, as I quote from memory, but if the words are wrong, the ideas are right.

I have exchanged with Mr. Valentine, Malvina for a man cook, named Smith, about 18 years of age. He is a good tempered, quick and efficient general servant, and though young, already skillful as a cook; and is anxious to go to the upper country, as he suffers with chills and fever here. He will be of much service on the return trip, as I have a lot of packages containing articles of furniture, mantle ornaments, books, clothing, &c., to be looked after. I would have left this miserable place sooner, but the steam boats run but twice a week. I console myself with the hope that Susan is enjoying and profiting by the excursion. I long to be with you. I am, as ever,

Your affectionate husband,

JOHN H. PEYTON.

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SAME TO SAME.

Lewisburg, July 14th, 1857.

*My dear Ann :*

I arrived here on yesterday in time for the court, but the business is delayed by the failure of Johnson and Baldwin to appear. They are expected tomorrow. I hope you are spending your time pleasantly, making Miss Herring's visit agreeable. Tell Susan it is my particular wish that she should write me frequently and at as great length as her engagements

will admit of. She is young and thoughtless and requires the counsels and advice of her father, which I will take much pleasure in giving her in letters, where it will be more permanent than if merely spoken. She is at an age when her acts and sayings are the subject of observation and comment, hence she cannot be too circumspect—next to the consciousness of acting right, the public voice should be regarded, and we should endeavor, by a prudent behavior, even in trifling matters, to secure it in our favor.

I hope my dear wife that you will also write me often. Mr. Rodgers, the stage driver, will take charge and safely deliver to me any letters you may wish to send.

Have you made the acquaintance yet of Dr. and Mrs. Nelson. You will find them agreeable and pleasant acquaintances—they are very intimate with Bernard's family. Have you visited your pretty little farm near the Springs. If not, go to see it, and let me know what you think of the property.\*

Judge Fry, who married a daughter of Parson McElhane, will be at the Sweet next week. They are worthy people and I will be glad if you can call on them. I think you will like them. The good parson has long been one of my most particular friends, and I want you to be civil to his daughter.

Excuse this hasty scrawl. My engagements do not admit of my saying more than that I send affectionate regards to Ben, Tom, sister Caroline and all the kith and kin about you.

I hope those agreeable New Yorkers—the Clarkes, are

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\*This was a farm of 350 acres lying in the Sweet Spring Valley, inherited by Mrs. Peyton from her father, and in 1894 is owned by her nephew, Dr. J. Lewis Woodville.

still at the Springs. The society of people of so much information and intelligence who have traveled abroad, is really improving.

Your affectionate husband,

JOHN H. PEYTON.

Mrs. John H. Peyton, Sweet Springs.

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SAME TO SAME.

Lexington, Va., April 20th, 1839.

*My Dear Ann:*

I have only time to write you a few lines to advise you of my safe arrival in good health at Lexington, where our friends and connections are all well. Tell Aunt Towles I have met her grandson, John Dabney, who recognized her son Thomas as he rode up to Taylor's. Taylor invited Mr. Dabney's family and John to take tea with us on yesterday evening, and to-day we are to dine with the Dabneys'. I am much pleased with Mrs. Dabney and her sister, Mrs. Price, and more so with John Dabney, who strikes me as a superior young man. Taylor is expecting his son, Dr. James Taylor, from Philadelphia, every day, where he has successfully concluded his medical studies. Their daughter Susan, who has been spending the winter in Alexandria, is also expected home in a few days.\* They wish to give them a royal reception, and wish our daughter Susan to come up for the merry making. Mrs. Taylor says if she will do so she will send her to the Natural Bridge, &c. I have told her I knew you would not part with Susan at this time, but I thought it probable you would allow her to spend a week

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\* Susan Taylor married some years subsequently Hon. John B. Weller, M. C. from Ohio, and afterwards Governor of California.



with them in May, after my return from the courts. She was glad to hear this and said she would send her son Robert and John Dabney to Staunton to escort her at that time.

Tell the overseer to take the calves off my grain, and let them run in the clover field back of the house—the grain is so far advanced now that the calves will injure it. I hope he has finished corn planting. Write me at the Warm Springs, either by Tom Michie or Wm. Frazier, telling me how the farming operations are going on, and how aunt Towles and our dear little children are.

Aunt McDowell, who is here, sends her best love to you, Mrs. Towles and sister Green. Mrs. Taylor says if Susan will come to her in May, she will meet her relations, the McDowells, who will return from Abingdon in April and be at home, and also Jane Preston, and other relatives who are coming with the McDowells, from Southwest Virginia for a visit to Lexington. I have time to say no more, as I am called to court.

Yours affectionately,

JOHN H. PEYTON.

The following extract from the *Spectator* possesses such interest that we make no apology for introducing it here:

JEFFERSON, STUART, PEYTON.

We have been much interested recently in reading the early history of the University of Virginia as developed in the unpublished letters of Jefferson and J. C. Cabell. One of the letters particularly struck us. It is from Mr. Jefferson to Mr. Cabell, and dated Monticello, May 13th, 1825, and

contains the warmly expressed opinions of two of our former citizens as to the professional ability, general qualifications and high character of the late Judge Dade, who was urged by his friends as a suitable person to be made Professor of Law in the new institution, Judge Stuart and Hon. John Howe Peyton were on a visit to Monticello at the period when Jefferson was perplexed by the declension of this Professorship by Mr. Gilmer, and Mr. Jefferson gives the substance of what Judge Stuart and Mr. Peyton said to him.

The letter will be read with interest by all, but more particularly by those who remember Judge Stuart and Mr. Peyton, two of our famous men of the past, both of whom died full of years and honors, bequeathing fortunes and leaving families, which have inherited their genius.

#### JEFFERSON'S LETTER.

DEAR SIR:—Every offer of our law chair has been declined, and a late renewal of pressure on Mr. Gilmer has proved him inflexibly decided against undertaking it. What are we to do? The clamor is high for some appointment. We are informed, too, of many students who do not come because that school is not opened; and some now with us think of leaving us for the same reason. You may remember that among those who were the subjects of conversation at our last meeting, Judge Dade was one; but the minds of the board were so much turned to two particular characters; that little was said of any others. An idea has got abroad, I know not from what source, that we have appointed Judge Dade and that he has accepted. This has spread extensively, perhaps from a general sense of his fitness, and I learn it has been received with much favor, and particularly among the students of the University. I know no more myself of Judge

Dade than what I saw of him at our Rockfish meeting, and a short visit he made me in returning from that place. As far as that opportunity enabled me to form an opinion, I certainly thought very highly of the strength of his mind, and the soundness of his judgment. I happened to receive Mr. Gilmer's ultimate and peremptory refusal while Judge Stuart and Mr. Howe Peyton, of Staunton, were with me. The former, you know, is his colleague on the bench of the General Court; the latter has been more particularly intimate with him, as having been brought up with him at the same school. I asked from them information respecting Mr. Dade, and they spoke of him in terms of high commendation. They state him to be an excellent Latin and Greek scholar, of clear and sound ideas, lucid in communicating them, equal as a lawyer to any of the judiciary corps, and superior to all as a writer; and that his character is perfectly correct, his mind liberal and accommodating, yet firm and of sound Republican principles.

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This is the substance, and these, I may say, the terms in which they spoke of him, and when I consider the character of these two gentlemen, and their opportunities of following what they attested, I could not but be strongly impressed. It happened very much to my gratification, that General Cocke was here at the same time, received the same information and impression; and authorizes me to add his concurrence in proposing the appointment to our colleagues; and to say, moreover, that if on such further inquiry as they may make, they should approve the choice, and express it by letter, in reference to a meeting for a conference on this subject, I might write to Judge Dade, and on his acceptance, issue his commission. I should add the gentlemen above named

were confident that he would accept, as well from other circumstances, as from his having three sons to educate. Of course this would put an end to the anxieties we have all had on this subject. The public impatience over some appointment to this school, renders desirable as early an answer as your convenience admits. Accept the assurance of my great esteem and respect.

TH. JEFFERSON.

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### MR. PEYTON'S WELCOME TO HENRY CLAY.

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In August, 1839, Henry Clay passed through Staunton on his return from Washington to his Kentucky home. The people determined to give him a warm greeting. A meeting was held and arrangements were made for his reception, and John H. Peyton was selected to make a speech of welcome.

A procession of gentlemen on horseback met the coach, in which Mr. Clay was travelling from Charlottesville, near Glendale, the present residence of George L. Peyton, Esq., and escorted him to town. On arriving in front of the Eagle Hotel, now the Spectator office, Mr. Clay descended from the coach and was met by *Mr. Peyton*, who welcomed him in a handsome and appropriate address in which he referred to his long and distinguished public services, his championship of constitutional freedom and his patriotic labors on behalf of the best interests of the country and tendering him the warm hospitalities of the town during his stay.\*

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\*NOTE.—The late Wm. Frazier, who was present, informed us that it was the most felicitous address he ever heard from one great man to another, and he greatly regretted that a stenographer had not been present to take it down.